

**FACT SHEET: Health Care in South Carolina**  
**What the Affordable Care Act is doing for South Carolina families**

The Affordable Care Act has already covered nearly one in three uninsured Americans – more than sixteen million – and improved coverage for virtually everyone with health coverage. Americans can no longer be denied coverage because of preexisting conditions, women can't be charged more just for being women, and there are no more annual caps on the care patients receive. Hospitals, doctors and other providers are changing the way they operate to deliver better care at lower cost. Hospitals, doctors and other providers are changing the way they operate to deliver better care at lower cost. In the years to come, the ability to buy portable and affordable plans on a competitive marketplace will allow countless Americans to move, start businesses, and dream big American dreams -- without worrying if an illness will bankrupt them. Here is how the Affordable Care Act is working for families in South Carolina:

**After Health Reform: Improved Access to Care**

- Gallup recently estimated that the uninsured rate in South Carolina in 2014 was 15.4 percent, down from 18.7 percent in 2013.
- Prohibits coverage denials and reduced benefits, protecting as many as 1,991,315 South Carolinians who have some type of pre-existing health condition, including 256,208 children.
- Eliminates lifetime and annual limits on insurance coverage and establishes annual limits on out-of-pocket spending on essential health benefits, benefiting 1,458,000 people in South Carolina, including 566,000 women and 397,000 children.
- Expands Medicaid to all non-eligible adults with incomes under 133% of the federal poverty level. If South Carolina expands Medicaid, an additional 160,000 uninsured people would gain coverage.
- Establishes a system of state and federal health insurance exchanges, or marketplaces, to make it easier for individuals and small-business employees to purchase health plans at affordable prices through which 170,948 people in South Carolina were covered in March 2015.
- Created a temporary high-risk pool program to cover uninsured people with pre-existing conditions prior to 2014 reforms which helped more than 2,207 people in South Carolina.

- Creates health plan disclosure requirements and simple, standardized summaries so 2,336,200 people in South Carolina can better understand coverage information and compare benefits.

### **After Health Reform: More Affordable Care**

- Creates a tax credit to help 154,221 people in South Carolina who otherwise cannot afford it purchase health coverage through health insurance marketplaces.
- Requires health insurers to provide consumers with rebates if the amount they spend on health benefits and quality of care, as opposed to advertising and marketing, is too low. Last year, 205,229 consumers in South Carolina received \$13,187,815 in rebates.
- Eliminates out-of-pocket costs for preventive services like immunizations, certain cancer screenings, contraception, reproductive counseling, obesity screening, and behavioral assessments for children. This coverage is guaranteed for more than 1,955,568 people in South Carolina including 822,354 women.
- Eliminates out-of-pocket costs for 696,175 Medicare beneficiaries in South Carolina for preventive services like cancer screenings, bone-mass measurements, annual physicals, and smoking cessation.
- Phases out the “donut hole” coverage gap for 98,862 Medicare prescription drug beneficiaries in South Carolina, who have saved an average of \$968 per beneficiary.
- Creates Accountable Care Organizations consisting of doctors and other health-care providers who share in savings from keeping patients well while improving quality, helping 97,311 Medicare beneficiaries in South Carolina.
- Phases out overpayments through the Medicare Advantage system, while requiring Medicare Advantage plans to spend at least 85 percent of Medicare revenue on patient care. Medicare Advantage enrollment has grown by 103,902 to 213,346 in South Carolina since 2009.

### **After Health Reform: Improved Quality and Accountability to You**

- Provides incentives to hospitals in Medicare to reduce hospital-acquired infections and avoidable readmissions. Creates a collaborative health-safety learning network, the Partnership for Patients, that includes 59 hospitals in South Carolina to promote best quality practices.

**We're not done. Other legislation and executive actions are continuing to advance the cause of effective, accountable and affordable health care. This includes:**

- Incentive payments for doctors, hospitals, and other providers to adopt and use certified electronic health records (EHR). In South Carolina more than 63 percent of hospitals and 39.2 percent of providers have electronic health records systems.
- A new funding pool for Community Health Centers to build, expand and operate health-care facilities in underserved communities. Health Center grantees in South Carolina now serve 325,015 patients and received \$141,193,957 under the health care law to offer a broader array of primary care services, extend their hours of operations, hire more providers, and renovate or build new clinical spaces.
- Health provider training opportunities, with an emphasis on primary care, including a significant expansion of the National Health Service Corps. As of September 30, 2014, there were 131 Corps clinicians providing primary care services in South Carolina, compared to 54 clinicians in 2008.

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